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THE UNIVERSITY  
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SCHOOL

**BULLETIN  
OF THE  
CENTER FOR  
CHILDREN'S  
BOOKS**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

## EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

- Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

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# Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 32

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Number 7

## *New Titles for Children and Young People*

Adoff, Arnold. *Where Wild Willie*; illus. by Emily Arnold McCully. Harper, 1978. 76-21390. 32p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.79 net.

- R  
K-2 Willie could be a boy or a girl; neither the text of the free, rhythmic poem nor the scrawly, color-washed line drawings establishes anything other than the facts that Willie is young, a child who stays out late and joyously explores the neighborhood, a child whose parents are concerned but not frantic. The poem describes with lilting fluency Willie's rambles and then the voices from home speak for themselves, an antiphonal arrangement in which the two draw closer until Willie comes home. The ending is especially warm, for there are no reprimands, no punishment: "willie / is you / willie / is me / willie is / com / in / home / to be / wild / willie / willie / wild / willie / be / free / be / free / willie / wild / willie / be / free."

Allan, Mabel Esther. *The View Beyond My Father*. Dodd, 1978. 78-7736. 192p. \$5.95.

- R  
6-9 Written with far more depth than her usual travel-and-adventure stories. Allan's first-person novel about a young adolescent who has been blind for two years and recovers her sight after an operation has pace and insight, and is especially fine in the characterization of a domineering Victorian father. Set in an English town in the 1930's, the story describes—from Mary's viewpoint—the struggle to be independent, and the joy she found when a boy who became her friend introduced her to his sympathetic, intelligent parents. The plot denouement may be, for most readers, Mary's joy when she realizes she can see again, but the more profound victory is in her finally convincing her father that she is capable and self-reliant. Mary's parents have shielded her too much because of her blindness, but most adolescent readers will recognize to some degree the conflict between parental protection and adolescent rebellion as a phenomenon of most teenage lives.

Anastasio, Dina. *A Question of Time*; illus. by Dale Payson. Dutton, 1978. 78-4916. 90p. \$7.50.

- Ad  
4-6 Sydell hated leaving New York and her best friend to move to the small Minnesota town that her great-grandfather, Jake, had run away from, years ago, to pursue an acting career. Syd expected boredom, but became intrigued by a mystery. Who was the old man who made such lifelike dolls, and why did one of them look exactly like Laura, the first friend she made in Parkersburg? When she discovered the old man's name was Stowe, like her own, and that the town's long-unsolved mystery—a suspected murder—had to do with the Stowe family, Syd was determined to find the answer. And she did. The fantastic and realistic elements are nicely meshed, although a bit dependent upon coincidence; the writing style is capable. What the story lacks, despite the attractions of a mystery and ghosts, is a sense of suspense or urgency.



Ancona, George. *Growing Older*; written and illus. with photographs by George Ancona. Dutton, 1978. 78-7605. 45p. \$7.95.

R 5-6 A series of interviews with old people, based on tapes, records a diversity of backgrounds, ethnic and financial, to give variety to a book illustrated with photographs. Some of the contributors emigrated, some are native Americans; some had comfortable, middle class childhoods and others were poor and could have no education or comforts. While there is a high current interest in the aged, this fills no empty niche; there are other such books. Nevertheless, the book provides some nostalgia and some humor, and the total effect on readers may be to vitiate any idea that life ends at seventy; some of those interviewed are marvelously filled with zest and joy, and several are still working. Some are sad as they look back, others have accepted change—and old age—with equanimity; what emerges most clearly is that old people are interesting, full of life if not always wisdom, and well worth knowing.

Arrick, Fran. *Steffie Can't Come Out to Play*. Bradbury, 1978. 78-4423. 196p. \$7.95.

R 8-10 Blonde, beautiful, tired of life in a small town and of her family's poverty, fourteen-year-old Stephanie dreams of becoming a model. She runs away, and when she reaches New York she's delighted when a kind and handsome man helps her, even gives her a bed for the night. She promptly falls in love with him and is ready to do anything her protector says. Her protector says "Hustle," since he's a pimp. Most of the book is an explicit exposé of a life of prostitution; interspersed with the episodes about Steffie are episodes about two policemen who patrol the district she's in and who—suspecting that the new girl is younger than she looks—try to find a way to help her. Fortunately for Steffie (who tells the story, save for the material about the police), she's sent to a halfway house after her pimp is hospitalized, and her parents take her home. She's still fourteen, but she's old. Candid, frightening, and poignant, the story demands credulity in Steffie's naiveté, but if the reader accepts that, her plight is believable, since the characterization and motivation are consistent.

Baylor, Byrd. *The Other Way to Listen*; illus. by Peter Parnall. Scribner, 1978. 78-23430. 27p. \$7.95.

SpR 3-5 In the spare and elegant veinings of his spacious black and white drawings, Parnall uses yellow for an effective contrast. The words are spoken by a child, who remembers his conversations with the old man who could hear the cactus flowers blooming or the rock murmuring to the lizard perching on it. There was no way, he said, to teach such listening, but one must feel that each object or creature is important, and one must be silent and patient. The child tried and tried to no avail, and then one morning, singing to the hills, heard the hills sing too. And, as the old man had said, it wasn't surprising at all, but seemed the most natural thing in the world. The lyric tone, the stately pace, and the quiet mood of the book will not appeal to every reader, but it may well enchant the nature-lovers among them.

Berger, Melvin. *The World of Dance*; illus. with photographs and engravings. Phillips, 1978. 78-14498. 190p. \$8.95.

Ad 6-9 A history of dance begins with an introductory chapter marred by generalizations such as "Ballet was created during the Renaissance as an expression of the new belief in an ordered, logical world." Separate chapters are devoted to regional or types of dances (dances of the Orient, the birth of ballet, modern dance, social dance) in chronological arrangement. The book provides a great deal of information, but it gives superficial coverage to contemporary dance (ballet or modern) especially to contemporary dancers and choreographers (no Tudor, no Fonteyn or Markova) and

it omits such stars as Pavlova. Useful, but not comprehensive, the book is written in a dry style. A divided bibliography and index are appended.

Bradbury, Bianca. *Where's Jim Now?* Houghton, 1978. 78-14832. 174p. \$7.95.

Ad 5-7 After his father's death, Dave and his mother were still recovering from the shock when they read a newspaper article about an adolescent delinquent. Was it their Jim, Dad's son by an earlier marriage? It was, and the two of them agreed that Jim ought to come to them when he was out of the rehabilitation center. Restless, Jim stole a car and was again arrested. Jim had been helping them prepare the old lodge for summer visitors, and the season had just begun when Jim showed up once more. This is more a story about Dave's divided feelings about his half-brother than anything else, although it's nicely balanced by other aspects of Dave's life. Dave feels at times he loves Jim; at times he is jealous, and often he feels distrust. When a prison crony of Jim's insists they rob the house, Dave contacts the police; then Jim calls and tells him to do that very thing—but by the time they reach the diner, Jim is dead, shot by his companion for squealing. The plot is not a strong one, but the book is capably written and it explores with sensitivity the conflicting emotions and the ethical dilemma that Dave and his mother experience. The mother-son relationship is particularly strong.

Burningham, John. *Would You Rather . . .* written and illus. by John Burningham. T. Y. Crowell, 1978. 78-7088. 30p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.49 net.

Ad 3-5 yrs. In an oversize book that provides good space for handling more than one painting on a page, Burningham offers young children a series of alternatives. Some are attractive: "Would you rather have . . . supper in a castle, breakfast in a balloon, or tea on the river?" with three illustrations; some are amusingly awful: "Would you rather be . . . covered in jam, or soaked with water, or pulled through the mud by a dog?" Again, three pictures, this time filling two pages. The pictures are delightful in their color, humor and composition; the text, however amusing, is slight, being merely a catalogue of choices.

Clifford, Eth. *The Rocking Chair Rebellion*. Houghton, 1978. 78-14834. 145p. \$6.95.

R 5-7 Opie is fourteen, irritated because her parents seem to her to be planning her future; her mother insists she should be a teacher, her father maintains she should go into social work. She becomes involved in a volunteer job, when she visits a former neighbor who's moved to an old people's home, in the program at the Maple Ridge Home for the Aged. The degree of her commitment annoys her mother and delights her father, and after Opie involves her own neighbors and the residents of the home in a block party she decides—having experienced the kind of help her father, a lawyer, has given—that she wants to be a lawyer, too. Her father's help has been needed because several of the residents of the home decide they want to go it alone (the rocking chair rebellion) and jointly purchase and live in their own house. Even Mom, despite her having wanted Opie to give up volunteer work, feels the injustice of the neighbors' objection (they go to court) to the old people, and supports the rocking chair rebellion. Opie's family problems are a nice counterfoil for the main thrust of the book, the problems of the aged who are often segregated and denigrated in our society; the seriousness of the problem is alleviated by a crisp style, sharp characterization, and humor.

Clymer, Eleanor (Lowenton). *Horatio Goes to the Country*; illus. by Robert Quackenbush. Atheneum, 1978. 78-5137. 64p. \$6.95.

Scratchboard illustrations record Horatio's dissatisfaction with the rural scene, especially when his progeny come along for the trip. In a fourth story about Mrs.

R  
4-6  
yrs. Casey's cat, Horatio proves to be reluctant in his role as father. The ride to the country is spoiled by the antics of the two kittens and Mrs. Casey's twin grandsons; once there, he finds it hard to adjust to the surroundings and even harder to be followed everywhere by the kittens. Just as he's learned the delights of night-prowling, it's time to go back to the city. Imagine his relief when the kittens stay behind, each firmly clutched by one of the twins, and Horatio can enjoy the prospect of peace on the journey and at home. There is humor in the incidents of the visit and food for thought in the reactions of an urbanite to the rural scene. Rather nice, too, to see a reversal of the usual country-is-better-than-city theme.

Cole, William, comp. *An Arkful of Animals: Poems for the Very Young*; illus. by Lynn Munsinger. Houghton, 1978. 78-70041. 88p. \$5.95.

R  
3-5 A pleasant selection of poems, this does not duplicate the material in Cole's *A Book of Animal Poems* and is nicely gauged for middle grades readers; it can also be used for reading aloud to younger children. All of the poems are light, most of them humorous; most of the poets are contemporary. The pen and ink illustrations are deft and comic, especially in the faces of the animal characters. Author, title, and first line indexes are provided.

Colman, Hila. *Rachel's Legacy*. Morrow, 1978. 78-12783. 190p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

R  
7-10 A story within a story frame is told by Rachel, one of the three daughters of a widowed Jewish woman who had come from Russia to East Side New York in the early 1900's. Mama and her older sister Esther were timid, clinging fearfully to the old ways; younger sister Ida adjusted with happy celerity to being an American; Rachel—who had a good brain and a protective instinct that drove her to work doggedly to provide the others with material comforts—was independent, hungry for culture, and ready to accept new ideas. The book gives a vivid picture of an immigrant family and of the period, it's well-written, and it has strong characterization. The framing story adds little: Rachel's daughter, destitute and living with her unemployed father after Rachel's death, decides not to contest a legal maneuver that will deprive her of money stipulated in her mother's will, for after going over her mother's history, she feels that she would rather be poor than cause a family rift, that she is rich enough in her heritage of courage. The fact that the author uses Yiddish terms without explaining them is a mild but recurrent irritant.

Cunningham, Julia. *Tuppenny*. Dutton, 1978. 78-7449. 87p. \$6.95.

R  
6-8 Readers who know Cunningham's earlier books, particularly *Dorp Dead*, will recognize the dark, occult strain and the grave compassion that appear here in a story about a strange girl, Tuppenny, who wanders into the lives of three couples in a small town. Each has lost a daughter: Victoria Standing had run away; Dorrie Mason had drowned; retarded Josie Herd is in an institution. Silent, mysterious, and forceful, Tuppenny brings changes for all of them and then slips off as quietly as she had come to town, her arrival and departure recorded by silent, unhappy Jessica Standing, the "other" daughter, the rejected child. She has been quick to love and trust Tuppenny, and her role in the story is strangely minimal. What Tuppenny does is make all of these parents face facts; Mrs. Standing admits she had hated as well as loved Victoria, and having confessed that to Tuppenny, she knows herself and loses her hate. Mrs. Herd understands her deep need and brings Josie home; as for the Masons, they confess the murder of their child and disclose their insanity. Victoria returns, and a new relationship with her parents is established. All Tuppenny's doing, and when this human catalyst disappears, the reader knows little more than was known at her coming. A therapeutic force? An avenging angel? Cunningham is so compelling a



writer that one is content to accept the mystery and symbolism, the violence of the past of her characters, and the transmutation from evil to good that her protagonist effects. A strong, strange story.

Dolan, Edward F. *Gun Control; A Decision for Americans*. Watts, 1978. 78-5576. 86p. illus. \$4.90.

R  
7-12 A thorough and objective exploration of the background, the pertinent statistics, the traditions, the organizations, and the conflicting viewpoints that are concerned in a topical and controversial subject. Dolan focuses on an analysis of present gun control laws and some proposed solutions to the conflict, such as restrictive licensing or national registration; he concludes with a survey of public opinion, the statistics on banning handguns showing a fairly clear geographical disagreement. The divided reading list contains publications by authors or organizations on both sides of the controversy; an index is included.

Estes, Eleanor. *The Lost Umbrella of Kim Chu*; illus. by Jacqueline Ayer. Atheneum, 1978. 78-59156. 86p. \$7.95.

R  
3-4 Nine-year-old Kim Chu's parents were busy at their restaurant, so it was Grandmother who was there each day when Kim came home, Grandmother who was disapproving when Kim borrowed her father's umbrella one day. It looked like an ordinary umbrella, but in the handle there was a secret compartment that held a scroll that had been given to Father by the people of New York's Chinatown. The umbrella disappeared while Kim was at the library; she decided she'd spotted the culprit and she followed him by El train and ferry to Staten Island. Her friend Mae Lee turned up on the ferry and both girls played detective, solving their case triumphantly. Even stern Grandmother was pleased when Kim told her dramatic story at the family dinner table. The plot is developed logically and at a good pace; the writing style is deceptively simple and ingenious, and the gentle humor of a believable adventure is echoed by the deft pen and ink drawings.

Fenner, Carol. *The Skates of Uncle Richard*; illus. by Ati Forberg. Random House, 1978. 78-55910. 46p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$5.99 net.

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3-4  
\* Three years before, Marsha had seen skaters on television, but it wasn't until recently that she'd seen a black figure skater. Nine now, she yearned for ice skates, half afraid she'd be inept, half dreaming of herself as a great skater. She did get skates for Christmas, but they weren't the lovely white skates she'd hoped for; her mother had saved Uncle Richard's ugly old hockey skates. A bitter disappointment, and it took a long time before Marsha tried them out. She was awful. Her ankles turned, she kept falling down, it was no fun at all. Then Uncle Richard appeared and he understood, he really understood her dream; he helped her get started and then he told her she must stand up and reach high, she must skate proudly. He told her she was a natural skater, and when he had left her, she glided proudly, "on the skates of Uncle Richard, taller and taller and taller, never falling down," the story ends. Fenner has an easy, natural writing style that has convincing dialogue and a smooth narrative flow; the story is nicely constructed and the author's perceptive sympathy is understated. Marsha doesn't accomplish miracles on the ice, no instant spins or axels, but readers are left with a warm feeling that she's only begun to see her dream come true.

Fleischman, Albert Sidney. *Humbug Mountain*; by Sid Fleischman; illus. by Eric von Schmidt. Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1978. 78-9419. 149p. \$7.95.

Another hilarious tall-tale adventure concerns a roving newspaper publisher of frontier times. Wiley, who tells the story, is irritated now and then when Pa goes off

R 4-6 by himself, but otherwise he's proud of Pa. And Ma. He even gets along with his sister Glorietta. Bound for Grandpa's planned town, Sunrise, the family finds only swampy Dakota Territory land and Grandpa's old riverboat—occupied by two desperadoes and what appears to be a ghost. The plot is full of salty characters, quirks of fate (the Sunrise land is retrieved—as it had been lost—when the river changes its course and places the property back in Dakota Territory after having placed it, briefly, in Nevada) and outwittings of rascals. Grandpa shows up; Pa proves to have disappeared periodically because he's been writing the trashy series that is Wiley's favorite reading, and the hero of those stories, Quickshot Billy, appears in person. A flavorful romp.

Forbes, Bryan. *International Velvet*. Mayflower Books, 1978. 160p. \$8.95.

Ad 7-9 A sequel to Bagnold's *National Velvet* is written by the director/producer of the film "International Velvet." Velvet, heroine of the first book, has been through an unhappy marriage and lost a child; she is living with a writer when she learns that her brother's child, Sarah, has been orphaned. Sarah comes to stay and is determined to be unhappy, adamant beyond her natural grief. Velvet buys Sarah a horse that her own Pie (winner of the Grand National) has sired. From there on Sarah has only one ambition, to ride in the Olympic Games. She does, the British team wins, and the story ends with Sarah coming home to Velvet with her fiancé and with the gold medal she gives to a happy aunt. Lovers of horses and/or horse stories will surely gulp this down with joy, but the fact is that the story line is for one audience, and the brittle, sophisticated dialogue between Velvet and John, the man with whom she lives, is for another.

Frost, Robert. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*; illus. by Susan Jeffers. Dutton, 1978. 78-8134. 24p. \$7.95.

R K-4 Although the picture book format indicates that this illustrated version of Frost's poem is best suited for a younger audience, there is really no age limit for good poetry, and many older readers should enjoy the illustrations: chiefly black and white and grey, the pictures of the trees and creatures of snow-stilled woods are touched briefly with the colors of an old man's clothing and the blanket on his sleigh. At times the color fades; that is, jacket or blanket may be left partly black and white. The pictures are realistic, save for one in which the artist has magnified snowflakes; although Jeffers has interpreted some of the poem (. . . "But I have promises to keep . . .") shows the man stopping at a house and being greeted by a woman and children) most of her delicate detail emphasizes the beauty of the woods in a frosted twilight.

Garfield, Leon. *The Confidence Man*. Viking, 1979. 78-14770. 279p. \$10.00.

R 7-10 Garfield places his story in the eighteenth century, a period he has used to rich advantage before, and perhaps exceeds his past record in the extravagant use of figures of speech, colorful dialect, and exaggerated character depiction. His straw villain, Captain von Stumpfel, is as slippery and mysterious a rogue as any in fiction, the dupes are incredibly naive, the strumpets brash, the naive foil (Zipfel) so credulous that one can hardly believe in him. Yet such is Garfield's persuasive ebullience that one does believe in Zipfel even as one believes in the protagonist Hans, a shrewd lad but an inveterate gambler and daydreamer. Persuading a band of German Protestants to follow him to the New World, von Stumpfel gets them as far as London, where they are rescued after his desertion and impoverishment so severe that some of them die. Here Hans, who tells the swashbuckling story, falls in love with an English waif whom he smuggles aboard as they set off for America, where a colony is founded and where he and the confidence man have one last encounter. So compel-

ling is Garfield's writing that one forgets one's tongue is skeptically in cheek or that Garfield's was in his.

Garner, Alan. *The Stone Book*; illus. by Michael Foreman. Collins/World, 1978. 78-7965. 60p. \$6.95.

Garner, Alan. *Granny Reardun*; illus. by Michael Foreman. Collins/World, 1978. 78-8141. 61p. \$6.95.

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3-5  
\* Many of Garner's books for older readers are superbly written but too intricate for many children; with *The Stone Book* he begins a cycle of related short novels for younger children and combines a profound depth and compassion with simpler writing and an intriguing story. The four stories are set in Cheshire, and both the setting and the dialogue, rich in local idiom, give color to the writing. In the first book, set in the past (four generations past) the young daughter of a stonemason wants to learn to read, but yearns—even if she can't read it—for a prayerbook to carry to Chapel, as the other girls do. Instead, her father takes her deep into a cleft in the hill, where she can read the record of the rocks: figures, and marks of the tide, and a handprint just the size of her own. And footprints. The handprint proves to be one her father made when he was her size, and she feels the joy of knowing that past generations have been in the same place. The other girls press flowers in their prayerbooks, but what Father makes Mary is a stone book that's even more wonderful, for the split stone shows the marks of an ancient fern. In *Granny Reardun*, Joseph is Mary's son, a boy who is raised by his grandmother because his mother can't afford to bring him up. All through the village Joseph sees evidence of the work of his grandfather, the stonemason; he helps the old man with his work, but he has no wish to carry on the tradition and asks to be apprenticed to the village smith. To his surprise, Grandfather is pleased at his initiative and Joseph is lightheaded with joy. The first book is set in Victorian times, but it and the second have a timeless quality; they are elemental, honest, touching vignettes of a simple life lived by good people, and they are small gems.

Gerson, Corinne. *Passing Through*. Dial, 1978. 78-51329. 193p. \$7.95.

M  
7-9 Her beloved older brother had committed suicide two months before, and Liz had withdrawn from her parents, feeling despair and hostility. When she began tutoring another fifteen-year-old, Sam, in French, she was at first uncomfortable with him also, for Sam was a wheelchair-bound victim of cerebral palsy. The three facets of the plot make it very heavy: Liz and Sam fall in love, and she meets and enjoys his big family, an extended Polish-American family with whom she feels comfortable in a way she can't feel at home; she has fights with her parents and wants to live with a couple for whom she babysits; she shows Sam her brother's last letter, which tells her he is gay and that that is the least of his problems. The writing style is undistinguished and the plot overburdened to an extent that cannot compensate for the characterization, which is quite competent, or the author's clear sympathy for the complex problems of adolescence.

Gessner, Lynne. *To See a Witch*. Nelson, 1978. 78-16646. 143p. \$6.95.

R  
6-8 A pre-Columbian community of cliff dwellers is vividly created in this story of a boy of twelve, Kopi, who yearns for manhood and admission to the kiva but is at the same time reluctant to give up the carefree role of a child. Jealous of a captive girl to whom his mother shows kindness, Kopi becomes malicious and then—filled with guilt—atones by his kindness to the girl. Again he shows his growing maturity by proving that a cousin, a boy of whom he is exceedingly jealous, is wrongly accused of witchcraft and should be re-admitted to the community from which he has been cast

out. The beliefs and the customs of the tribe, the patterned beauty of their way of life, and—in particular—the relation between living patterns and the environment—are smoothly incorporated into a story with good structure and momentum.

Glazer, Tom. *All About Your Name, Anne*; illus. by Demi. Doubleday, 1978. 77-82444. 45p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$5.90 net.

M  
3-6 One of a series of ten books about common first names (others are David, James, Elizabeth, John, Joseph, Katherine, Mary, Susan, and William) begins with early use of the name, variant forms, diminutives, and a paragraph on how the name spread. There are sections (a page or two each) on such topics as geographical names that incorporate forms of "Anne," fictional Annies, a recipe for potatoes Anna, Annes in sports, royal Annes, "Politici-Anns," Annes in fine arts, et cetera. Most of the sections give half a dozen brief comments on individuals. Haphazard information is presented in random fashion; the book has limited use and may best be thought of as a gift for individual children who have the name of Anne—or a variant—and may be curious about it.

Goble, Paul. *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*; written and illus. by Paul Goble. Bradbury, 1978. 77-20500. 27p. \$8.95.

R  
K-2 The clean lines and brilliant palette of Goble's style are somewhat softened by some variations (abstractions of black clouds, a crayon rainbow) to illustrate a tale in the folk tradition. An Indian girl who loves horses is with them as much as her duties permit; when a storm frightens the herd into a stampede, she goes off with them. Both the girl and the horses are enchanted by a wild horse. Found by her people, the girl visits them—but she goes back to her horses and to the proud, wild stallion. Each year she returns to visit, bringing a colt as a gift—and then, one year, she is missing. She is never seen again, but after that when the people see the stallion, he has a beautiful mare at his side. This is less specific than many of the tales about human-animal mating; it is simply and fairly effectively told, but it is the pictures that carry the book.

Green, Phyllis. *Nicky's Lopsided, Lumpy but Delicious Orange*. Addison-Wesley, 1978. 78-4599. 111p. \$7.95.

R  
4-6 Nicky's mother is an artist, a careless housekeeper, a warm and loving person; she can't understand why Nicky tries to be perfect and lets people take advantage of her, especially Nicky's domineering classmate Ernestine. Nicky can't understand why Alex, her beloved stepfather, a priest who has kept his recent marriage secret (fearing that he could not, if exposed, keep up his program of helping migrant workers) keeps delaying disclosure. When the secret is discovered, there's some unpleasant publicity, but Alex learns he can go on with his social work, and Nicky is overjoyed: they will be a family at last. Nicky's orange is a painting, a symbol of her acceptance of imperfection (she'd been painting perfect orange globes) that she can at last put on paper, a reflection of the fact that she herself can relax and dare to be less than perfect. She'd been convinced it was because she had been imperfect that her father had walked out, and had been trying ever since to be so good, so nice that she'd never lose love again. She has learned, as with the orange, that one can have worth despite imperfections. The story has good dialogue and thoughtful characterizations, and it's imbued with the warmth of Nicky's relationships with her mother and with Alex.

Guy, Rosa. *Edith Jackson*. Viking, 1978. 77-28098. 187p. \$8.95.

Edith, who appeared in the author's *The Friends*, is now seventeen; although she and her three younger sisters live with a foster mother, it is Edith who feels re-

R  
8-12      sponsible for the others, who vows that when she is of age she will work and provide a home for them. They will not be separated. But they are: one sister runs off with their foster mother's lover; one is taken in by a white couple whose daughter is her best friend. Edith becomes the reluctant protégée of Mrs. Bates, a black woman lawyer, and falls in love with the woman's nephew. For Edith it's love—for James it's just another easy conquest. The story ends with Edith's discovery that she is pregnant; she turns first to Phyllisia, who welcomes her—and then, sitting in a welfare agency office, Edith suddenly walks out and telephones Mrs. Bates to tell her she is going to have an abortion. And Mrs. Bates simply says she is coming, she'll be with her soon. That's how the story ends, but what is left unsaid (and is clear) is that Edith has admitted to herself that the encouragement Mrs. Bates has offered, and her help, will be accepted. Proud and strong, Edith had been insisting on getting a job and holding the family together—which meant accepting the role of mother to her sisters—and now she can admit that she can change her life if she will focus on her own needs. The characterization is excellent, the writing style smooth, and the depiction of an adolescent torn between her need for independence and achievement and her feeling of responsibility (which has pushed her into protecting the sisters who don't want protection) strong and perceptive.

Hart, Stephanie. *Is There Any Way Out of Sixth Grade?* Coward, 1978. 78-17388. 133p. \$6.95.

NR  
5-6      Sonya is one of a group of sixth-graders at a small boarding school for girls, and the story she tells is concerned chiefly with the preparations for a pageant (a Revolutionary War battle) the history teacher is directing. The plot line is thin, the writing uneven in pace and undistinguished in style. Characterization is exaggerated and dialogue banal, the one aspect of the book that may have some appeal for readers being the relationships among the girls and those between them and the boys of a nearby all-male boarding school; there's some banter, a few incidents with substance (Sonya tells a lie to the school head and, miserable about it, makes a public confession) and a great deal of padding.

Hayes, Geoffrey. *Patrick Comes to Puttyville and Other Stories*; written and illus. by Geoffrey Hayes. Harper, 1978. 77-25668. 118p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.79 net.

M  
3-4      Toys are the characters in a story about a small teddy bear. After his father has decamped, Patrick and his mother move to the small house she's inherited in the town of Puttyville. Here Patrick makes a friend, has small adventures like going into a supposedly haunted house at Hallowe'en, and learns a few lessons—like not shoplifting. There's no story line; the incidents are mild and rather humorless. The writing style is adequate, weakened by the author's tendency to use rather pretentious polysyllabic words: "The grocer stroked his chin in a cogitating way . . . Employing the lid of a tin can, he severed the pumpkin from its stalk . . . Pastoral prints hung crookedly . . ." which seem a bit heavy for most primary grades readers.

Heide, Florence Parry. *Secret Dreamer, Secret Dreams*. Lippincott, 1978. 78-8736. 95p. \$6.95.

R  
6-8      Caroline's teacher introduces her in a few pages—after that it is Caroline's story. She is thirteen, a special child who cannot read, write, or speak, save for an occasional word, and the author, expressing Caroline's feelings about herself and her world, gives her a full vocabulary for that expression. If one can accept this device, the book becomes believable, for Caroline "writes" with perception and anguish about her frustration. She listens to others, when she wants to listen, and she often expresses her anger and despair through hostile acts. The story can help readers understand the plight of someone so handicapped, and it draws a vivid picture of the complex attitudes and emotions of the members of a family with whom such a special

child lives. The book ends on a poignant note, as Caroline speaks of her dog, “. . . Brumm barks helplessly, his voice as unintelligible as my own, his message and mine forever undelivered.”

Herzig, Alison Cragin. *A Word to the Wise*; by Alison Cragin Herzig and Jane Lawrence Mali; illus. by Martha Perske. Little, 1978. 78-17447. 166p. \$6.95.

Ad 4-5 There are eight of them in the special reading group, and they know perfectly well that they are the fifth grade “dummies.” When they hear the reading specialist refer to one book as “a treasure—an absolute treasure,” but a book they’re not ready to read, the group steals it and each has a turn to take it home. It’s a thesaurus, and for each child it proves the answer to a problem when it provides a splendidly impressive list of synonyms. There’s a good deal of humor, fifth grade level, in the writing, and a nice display of comradeship and enterprise in the story, but coincidence and contrivance weaken it.

Hightower, Florence C. *Dreamwold Castle*. Houghton, 1978. 78-14562. 214p. \$7.95.

Ad 5-7 Phoebe was not happy. She had made no friends at her new school, she disliked the owner of the house in which she and her mother lived, and she missed her aunt and the family friend, Ben Barker. She didn’t like the man who seemed to be so assiduously courting her mother. So when wealthy, poised Constance invited Phoebe to her home, Dreamwold Castle, to meet an invalid twin brother who shared Phoebe’s intense interest in mountain climbing, Phoebe was enthralled. She knew there was something mysterious about the twins’ older brother, a rebel who’d been rejected by his father; Tony kept in touch with the twins and seemed a romantic character. But when Tony showed up, Phoebe found that there was something odd about him—at times he was pleasant, at other times harsh and dictatorial. Even when she learned that he was a criminal, Phoebe was so under the spell of friendship that she helped Tony escape. After she heard of his suicide, Phoebe confessed to Ben Barker, who was the replacement for her dead father in her affection. The story ends with Ben and Charlotte’s marriage, and Phoebe’s joy at their reunion, for the couple have decided to move in order to be with Phoebe and her mother. Mother, incidentally, has discovered that her beau has a wife in Japan. The story gets off to a slow start with several pages about a family ghost, an aspect that has little to do with the story line, but Hightower’s craftsmanship quickly compensates for this, as Phoebe becomes more and more involved with the twins and their often deceitful behavior. It isn’t a strong plot, but it’s a perceptive and sympathetic picture of a young person who lets her ethical concepts be subjugated to a combination of romantic ideas and emotional needs.

Hobzek, Mildred. *We Came a-Marching . . . 1, 2, 3*; illus. by William Pène du Bois. Parents’ Magazine, 1978. 78-7793. 29p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.41 net.

R 4-7 yrs. The distinctive palette and engaging details of Pène du Bois’ painting add beauty to a rhyming narrative that teaches its young audience how to count 1, 2, 3 in twelve languages. Sample: “On a sunny morning / We were called for duty / We came a-marching, one, two, three / Sacha, Stanislav and me / We came a-marching one, two, three / Sacha, Stanislav and me!” Next the three digits are in German, next in Russian, then Polish: “We must see those birdies / But we had no ladder / How could we do it, jeden, dwa, trzy / Sacha, Stanislav and me / How could we do it, *YEH-den, dvah, tshee* / Sacha, Stanislav and me.” Italics are used here to show the words printed in red in the book. The story follows three children in their imaginative play as they examine the nest of a huge bird and have other adventures; based on a German folktale, the poem is set to the music of a traditional Slavic marching song, the notation of which is provided at the back of the book. Great fun.



Hoople, Cheryl G., comp. *As I Saw It: Women Who Lived the American Adventure*. Dial, 1978. 78-51324. 187p. \$8.95.

R 6-\* A series of letters, journal and diary excerpts, and other historical documents gives varied and absorbing accounts of some of the adventures and accomplishments in the lives of women in American history. A few are well known—such people as Narcissa Whitman, Abigail Adams, or Clara Barton—and in the statements by them and others (slaves, doctors, spies, pioneers, early colonists in California or New England) there are both personal troubles and triumphs, and a broad view of American history. Each excerpt is prefaced by the compiler's introduction, and the whole has a wonderful vitality, from Lady Margaret Wyatt's despondent letter to her sister, written in 1623, to the commentary by Mary Antin, a Jewish immigrant who came to America in 1894.

Hoover, H. M. *The Lost Star*. Viking, 1979. 78-25718. 143p. \$8.95.

R 7-10 A science fantasy set in the far future on a distant planet that is inhabited by imagined life forms, some of them sentient and intelligent, is not unusual—but Hoover gives it vitality and credence by the perception with which she considers the responsibility the humans have for the culture they discover, and by the sensitivity with which she presents the efforts of her young protagonist to gain independence from her parents and find her own career. Lian is fifteen, already a fine astrophysicist trained to follow in her parents' path. When her vehicle crashes, she's rescued by an archeologist and taken to the site where his crew is working. Telepathic, she learns the secret of an ancient culture and identifies its few descendants as intelligent creatures who have assumed a facade of dullness to mask their fear of invaders. Her mother is angry because Lian wants to stay with the expedition, but the girl is firm, having realized at last that her parents have taken her future for granted. The story is open-ended as far as Lian's career decision goes, but it firmly rounds off the progress and the encouraging future for the alien race of which she has become fond and to whom she seems a loved benefactor.

Hopf, Alice L. *Biography of a Giraffe*; illus. by Patricia Collins. Putnam, 1978, 76-52934. 61p. \$5.49.

R 2-4 Large print and a simple, direct—at times dry—writing style make a life cycle text eminently suitable for primary grades readers. Hopf begins with the birth of a baby giraffe, delivered while a ring of protective females circle the mother; she describes the care of the young, the way in which "nurse" females help the mother with that care, and the many lessons the young giraffe learns as it grows: how to feed, how to cope with predators, which animals are friendly. The text discusses mating, establishing superiority between males, and behavior of the herd. Facts about anatomy, diet, and environment are smoothly incorporated into a lightly fictionalized text, illustrated with effective, rather dark etchings, to give a good introduction to the subject.

Hyde, Margaret O. *Know About Alcohol*; illus. by Bill Morrison. McGraw-Hill, 1978. 78-7988. 80p. \$6.95.

R 5-7 More and more heavy drinkers are people under twenty; more and more accidents that are fatal and are caused by drinking have people under twenty as victims; the number of children who are drinking is increasing. Hyde does not preach; she explains why people drink, why they are affected in different ways and at different rates. She describes the effects of alcohol on the body and suggests some ways in which alcoholics can be identified, and she gives information about organizations that help alcoholics. One chapter poses problems and gives multiple choice answers for questions of personal decision such as what to do if one is a baby sitter and a drunken parent offers a ride home, or if there is an alcoholic in the family and one wants to help. Straightforward in style, the book gives no unusual information, but it covers

many aspects of the problem and it is written with clarity and objectivity. A list of places to obtain further information, a reading list, and an index are appended.

Italiano, Carlo. *Sleighs: the Gentle Transportation*; written and illus. by Carlo Italiano. Tundra Books, 1978. 28p. \$9.95.

R Under the title *The Sleighs of My Childhood*, this was published in Canada, where  
4- it won the award for the best illustrated children's book of 1974. Meticulously detailed and colorful paintings depict a type of sleigh on every page, with a descriptive text below; for example, the baked bean sleigh passed on certain days of the week, and housewives would come with their empty bean pots and exchange them for a full pot of baked beans that had been kept in an insulated section of the sleigh. The sleighs are drawn from the author's memory and from pictures, for Montreal in the 1920's and 1930's depended almost entirely on sleighs for transportation and deliveries through the deep winter snows. Now only the sightseeing sleighs remain, so that this book has historical value in addition to its beauty.

Janice. *Mr. and Mrs. Button's Wonderful Watchdogs*; illus. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1978. 78-8451. 29p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

Ad Vibrant watercolors are the medium in Duvoisin's illustrations, vigorous and  
4-6 comic, for a story about a couple who buy a series of increasingly ferocious dogs—or  
yrs. so they think. The two cats and the dachshund the Buttons already have are far too friendly to give protection against burglars, so they buy a boxer, a German police dog, a Doberman Pinscher, and an Irish wolfhound. Each dog attacks someone making a delivery, is scolded by the other animals for jumping on a friend, and subsequently stops acting hostile. When a real burglar comes, he is routed by the animals simply because there are so many of them and because they greet him so affectionately that they knock him down and make a great deal of noise. The Buttons wake, see the frightened burglar run off, and decide in their amusement that they really are safe. The writing style is adequate, the plot rather predictable, but the action and humor should appeal to the read-aloud audience, as should the household full of animals.

Katz, William Loren. *An Album of the Great Depression*; illus. with photographs. Watts, 1978. 77-21413. 96p. \$5.90.

R The grim story of the Great Depression that began with the crash of the stock  
5- market in 1929 is effectively told here through captioned photographs and a text that is broken down into smaller, specific subjects such as the march of the war veterans on Washington, the plight of sharecroppers, the 1932 election, the growth of popular culture, and the beginnings of the social security system. The author gives some background information about the economic situation that led to the crash, describes Hoover's attitude, Roosevelt's election and the various relief measures taken by the New Deal government, and ends with the looming problems of the war in Europe and the declaration of war by the United States after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Katz does not pretend to objectivity; he is clearly anti-Hoover, clearly antifascist—but he makes no judgmental comments, stating the facts as he sees them and leaving the reader to make inferences. A comprehensive study is made dramatic by the many photographs; a bibliography (chiefly of adult titles) and an index are appended.

Kingman, Lee. *Head Over Wheels*. Houghton, 1978. 78-15650. 186p. \$7.95.

Seventeen-year-old identical twins Kerry and Terry are in an automobile accident; Kerry is not hurt, but Terry suffers multiple injuries, including a damaged spinal

R 7-10 cord. He will not walk again. Terry, bitter and fearful, rejects his twin; Kerry feels guilty for being unscathed, despondent over the rift, and worried about his brother's future. He's also worried because Jen, his girl, seems to be closer to Terry than anyone else—will he lose her too? Not until Terry is home, hostile and self-absorbed, does his healthy twin rebel and make it clear that he too is suffering—and for the first time the brothers really talk frankly, so that the story ends on an encouraging note. Kingman does an excellent job of showing the grief and stress within a family when one of its members is suffering a traumatic disaster. Medical details are smoothly incorporated, the characterization and relationships are perceptively drawn, the writing serious but not melodramatic.

Knotts, Howard. *Great-Grandfather, the Baby and Me*; written and illus. by Howard Knotts. Atheneum, 1978. 78-2940. 30p. \$5.95.

R 4-7 yrs. A small boy tells the story, and Great-Grandfather's story is folded within it. The boy is feeling sad, because his father has gone off to the hospital to bring home Mommy and the new baby sister. The new baby has been named Mary Alice, but the boy feels strange about her: Mary Alice means nothing; "I didn't know who she was," he says. Great-Grandfather puts a consoling arm around the boy and tells him a long anecdote about when he was sixteen, working on a Canadian wheat farm, and about how he rode miles and miles on a hot summer Sunday just to see a new baby. People did that then, he said. The life was such an isolated one, and everybody was so happy when a baby was born. And the child is comforted; he hears the car in the driveway and goes, hand-in-hand with Great-Grandfather, to see the new baby. Fine-textured line drawings capture the gentle quality of the writing; there is tenderness implicit in the relationship between the very old man and the child, and the story gives a fresh treatment to the dethronement problem.

Kuskin, Karla. *A Space Story*; illus. by Marc Simont. Harper, 1978. 76-24312. 29p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$7.49 net.

R 5-7 yrs. Accurate information about the solar system, given concisely yet in poetic style, is framed by fiction; it begins with a small boy asking his mother if people live on the stars he can see from his bedroom window. Mother says people can live on planets, but not stars. The astronomical information follows, with the description of each planet ending in a comment such as "No one like Sam could live there." But galaxies away, there are other systems and other planets, and on one of these another small boy asks his mother the question Sam asked and gets the answer Sam received. "I wonder what they're like," the boy far away muses, and his mother closes the door and softly, as Sam's mother had, bids her son goodnight. A poetic concept that should stimulate children's imagination, and facts that should stimulate their curiosity are nicely blended; Simont's paintings are bold, colorful, and lyric.

Landshoff, Ursula. *Okay, Good Dog*; written and illus. by Ursula Landshoff. Harper, 1978. 77-25648. 64p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$5.79 net.

R 1-3 While this book for beginning independent readers doesn't give full information on dog care, it presents the basics in a direct, easily comprehensible way. Simple paint and crayon drawings add humor and make some of the instructions more clear. The text discusses housebreaking, being gentle but firm, training for cooperative behavior, and teaching a dog tricks. It stresses kindness, mentions getting shots, and using rewards to teach; it does not give information about what to feed a dog or describe coping with illness, save for carsickness. Not comprehensive, but a good introduction.

Livingston, Myra Cohn, ed. *Callooh! Callay! Holiday Poems for Young Readers*; illus. by Janet Stevens. Atheneum, 1978. 78-8794. 131p. \$7.95.

R  
4-6 Whenever Livingston compiles an anthology of poetry, readers can expect a wide range of sources and a high standard in the choices made. Here the poems chosen for major holidays and birthdays include some standard anthology selections (Langston Hughes' "Mother to Son," Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet's "Abraham Lincoln") and such well-known poets as Frost, McCord, Tennyson, Merriam, or Shakespeare, but there are also poems from less familiar writers and from other countries: China, Russia, Germany. A fine holiday smorgasbord, with author, title, and first line indexes, and a list of translators.

Maestro, Betsy. *Lambs for Dinner*; by Betsy and Guilo Maestro; illus. by Guilo Maestro. Crown, 1978. 78-4077. 32p. \$6.95.

Ad  
4-6  
yrs. Every day as she left for work, Mama Sheep warned her four children not to open the door, for "Mr. Wolf told me that he wants to have you for dinner." The first time he knocked, Mr. Wolf was told to go away; the next time, he said he was Mama, but they knew Mama's voice was sweeter. He ate some honey, but they spotted his grey fur; Mama's fur was white. He covered himself with flour, and the ruse worked. They opened the door and Mr. Wolf caught and bagged three of the four. Sounds familiar? No, there's a twist: Mama comes home, rushes to Mr. Wolf's house, and finds her happy progeny sitting at the table waiting to be served. The story is simply told and is illustrated with rather static but nicely composed pictures. Nicely constructed, the tale's operative phrase opens opportunities for discussion of the alternative meanings words may have. However, it may be hard for young children to understand why anyone who is so anxious to be hospitable goes through the flour and honey deceptions and then carries his guests off in a large bag.

Malipiero, Antonio. *The Book of What and How*. St. Martin's, 1978. 78-3965. 88p. illus. \$10.00.

NR  
5-7 A supersize book, first published in Italy, has a random arrangement of twenty chapters, the subjects of which seem to be rather arbitrarily chosen. There's nothing in the field of medicine and little that touches the field of biological science; emphasis is on technology, electronics, physics, and chemistry. The pages are printed in double columns, with a larger type face on the recto than on the verso pages, which is visually jarring. Illustrations are profuse, but are not always provided with a caption or labelling. The articles are factual and adequately written, about on the level of encyclopedia articles. There is no index; given its flaws and the lack of balance in content (four chapters on petroleum or petrochemicals none on transplants, prosthetic devices, aircraft) the book seems to give little that cannot be easily found in other and more comprehensive books on individual topics, or in encyclopedias.

Milton, Hilary H. *Nowhere to Run*. Watts, 1978. 78-2798. 153p. \$6.90.

NR  
6-7 Wayne is thirteen, his sister Linda eight; their divorced mother has become an alcoholic and they find, when their father shows up in her absence and says she's forgotten to tell them he'd arranged "a little trip," that what he really has done is take them to his home to avoid child support payments. Their mother doesn't know it, since Dad lies about telephoning her. They then find that their stepmother doesn't want them, so they run away—to encounter further troubles, one of which is being shanghied by a migrant worker who plans to have them work and shoplift for him. The grim story ends when Linda has an accident and Wayne gets in touch with their grandfather, whose home had been their goal. They haven't wanted to get in touch with mother, since Linda has felt "She don't like me." The writing style is mediocre,

the characterization superficial; Milton depicts a world in which almost every adult character takes advantage of children, and he creates an unconvincing story line.

National Geographic Society. *National Geographic Picture Atlas of Our Fifty States*. National Geographic Society, 1978. 78-10385. 304p. Trade ed. \$14.95; Library ed. \$16.95 net.

Ad 4-6 States are regionally grouped in this atlas and are alphabetized within each group; inserted between groups are such chapters as "The Wonders of Agriculture," "America at Work," and "Weather and Climate," subjects that seem to have been chosen at random and whose inclusion seems of dubious value. The photographs, maps, and drawings are of good quality but are at times crowded together on a single page. The text, printed in three columns, has accurate and useful information but apparently haphazard arrangement of material for each state; statistics and pictures of the state's flag, bird, and flower head each section. Useful, but no more so than other atlases, and weakened by the crowded format and the inclusion of the random articles. An appended "Facts at Your Fingertips" section provides a quick reference source of some facts; an annotated bibliography and an index (with keys to map and text references) are provided; a large map, folded, is inserted under a back cover flap.

Oxford Scientific Films. *The Stickleback Cycle*; illus. with photographs by David Thompson. Putnam, 1979. 77-28754. 27p. \$6.95.

R 3-5 \* Superb color photographs, life size or magnified, illustrate a text that is lucid and succinct, logically organized and written in a simple, direct style. The brief text describes the stickleback and focuses on the male, which assumes vivid coloration during the mating season; he courts the female, builds the tunnel-shaped nest, fertilizes and cares for the young. The photographic section that follows, which includes pictures of the embryo, has a running text at the foot, reiterating and expanding the facts given at the start of the book.

Pascal, Francine. *My First Love and Other Disasters*. Viking, 1979. 78-2520. 182p. \$8.95.

Ad 7-9 Vicky, fifteen, is so smitten by Jim that she connives and coaxes and erodes objections on her parents' part so that she can get a summer job on Fire Island just because she's learned that Jim will be there. She knows he's going steady, but Vicky convinces herself that once they meet, Jim will succumb. As summer helper to a young divorcee with two children, Vicky goes off to her first job (it isn't easy) and her first love (it's even more confusing) and finds (old formula) that she prefers steady Barry to conceited Jim. Vicky tells the story and it's often amusing despite her exaggerations; there's a bit of moral tone (Vicky learns What Men Want) and some sophisticated candor about what goes on at Fire Island and some heroics when Barry and Vicky each play a part in rescuing two children and their grandfather caught by a storm while boating. Pascal has a good ear for dialogue and a good sense of adolescent concerns, but she weakened the book by pushing the story a bit too hard.

Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw. *Animal and Plant Mimicry*; illus. with photographs and drawings. Holiday House, 1978. 78-7457. 126p. \$6.95.

R 6-9 Patent makes it clear at the outset that the mimicry in nature is not intentional, a pitfall into which less professional writers in the field of biology often fall. Her clear and comprehensive discussion of the subject begins with a review of seminal studies in the field and explains why the mimic has a better chance of survival and therefore thrives as a species. The text describes various kinds of mimicry (fooling predators, fooling prey, deception by taste or appearance) throughout the discussion of mimic-model pairs like the monarch and viceroy butterflies; predators that imitate the

species on which they prey; species that develop imitative protective coloration; or insects that practice tactile mimicry. There have been other good books on the subject for children; there are none that are more clear or authoritative. A glossary, a bibliography, and a relative index are appended.

Pinkwater, Daniel Manus. *The Last Guru*; written and illus. by Daniel M. Pinkwater. Dodd, 1978. 78-14260. 122p. \$6.95.

M  
5-6 There's a lot of robust Pinkwater humor and an appealing concept in this story of a twelve-year-old who becomes a multibillionaire, but it's run into the ground, alas. Harold and his parents flee the publicity hounds and reporters and take refuge in the neon castle of a sympathetic health food tycoon, leave there to hide in a mountain village in India, and are mildly surprised to learn that Harold has been chosen as the reincarnation—and successor—to a Tibetan lama of the Silly Hat Sect. Harold returns to the States after two years to find a country in which the gurus have taken over, and he eliminates his competitors to become the last guru, after which the craze dies and he makes plans to go to college and major in physical education. There's a lot of spoofing of food-chain fads, gurus, and other facets of popular culture, but the humor and exaggeration are heavy-handed and the thin story is submerged by them.

Platt, Kin. *Chloris and the Weirdos*. Bradbury, 1978. 78-55214. 231p. \$7.95.

R  
6-8 Jenny writes about her problems and her sister Chloris in a sequel to *Chloris and the Creeps* and *Chloris and the Freaks*. Jenny's thirteen, Chloris fifteen and difficult. Chloris had hated the stepfather Jenny loved, and she's bitterly resentful when their mother has a date; angry, and fearful that Mom may marry again. Jenny's more understanding, aware of her mother's loneliness, and she's happily establishing a relationship with her first boyfriend, Harold. Platt does a marvelously perceptive and amusing job with Jenny and Harold: they are nervous but candid with each other, neither wanting to be too committed and both finding joy in friendship as well as excitement at being in love. When an exasperated Chloris flounces off for a forbidden weekend at the same time Mom is making her gesture of independence (a weekend date) there's a showdown. The characters have vitality and conviction, the relationships are perceptively drawn, and there's an abundance of humor—especially in the dialogue between Jenny and her skateboard-addict Harold.

Plotz, Helen, comp. *Life Hungers to Abound: Poems of the Family*. Greenwillow, 1978. 78-5829. 181p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.63 net.

R  
7- One of the major compilers of anthologies for children and young people, Plotz adds another fine anthology to those she has already published. The poems represent all aspects of family life and are arranged under five rubrics: "Marriage," "Parent to Child," "Brothers & Sisters," "Ancestors & Descendants," and "Child to Parent." Some of the selections are from ancient Rome or China; many English and American poets of the past are included; such contemporary writers as Carruth, Ginsberg, Rukeyser, Sarton, and Clifton are represented. Author, title, and first line indexes are provided.

Prelutsky, Jack. *The Mean Old Mean Hyena*; illus. by Arnold Lobel. Greenwillow, 1978. 78-2300. 30p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

R  
K-3 Lobel creates an appropriately hideous hyena in some very funny scenes with his victims, as Prelutsky's nasty anti-hero pulls a briar-patch ploy when the other animals seek revenge for the tricks he's perpetuated—like painting the zebra plaid or tying the ostrich's neck in a knot. While the mischief will appeal to young listeners,



there's an even greater appeal in the rhyme and rhythm of Prelutsky's verse, with its humor and use of refrain, alliteration, and internal rhyme. The story begins, "The hyena was lazy and lanky / he was sneaky and slinky and lean / He was clever and crafty and cranky / and oh! he was ever so mean."

Provensen, Alice, illus. *A Peaceable Kingdom: The Abecedarius*; illus. by Alice and Martin Provensen. Viking, 1978. 78-125. 40p. \$8.95.

R  
4-7  
yrs. Published as "Animal Rhymes" in the Shaker Manifesto of 1882, this newly-illustrated version adds appropriately quaint, prim people, details of Shaker artifacts and costumes, and an enchanting variety of animals to the original text. Twenty-six rhymed lines have a lilting appeal; at the start of each line the first letter of the first animal is written boldly: "ALLIGATOR, Beetle, Porcupine, Whale / BOBOLINK, Panther, Dragonfly, Snail . . ." and so on. The pages are pale beige, stained to look like old paper, and the pictures, in a running frieze, are in soft colors, so that the whole looks like an old book. An afterword by Richard Barsam, student of Shaker life, gives some background information about the Shaker community.

Quackenbush, Robert. *The Most Welcome Visitor*; written and illus. by Robert Quackenbush. Windmill/Dutton, 1978. 78-16627. 32p. \$7.95.

Ad  
K-2 Fred Horny Toad moves into a new house; on New Year's Day, a relative comes to visit—and stays. It's Great-great-great Grandfather, a Komodo Dragon, and he snores. On subsequent holidays through the year, other reptilian relatives come, and they stay, and it gets noisier and noisier. At last, Christmas comes, and the most welcome visitor, Santa Claus, who brings Fred kettle drums. They are so noisy that all the visitors leave. There is appeal in the repetition and cumulation used in the text, but the crowded-house concept isn't used to tell a story (as it is in so many folktales) and there's little forward action until the end. While the crowded drawings do show reptile species, there are no separate pictures that can be used for identification; the gecko, crocodile, box turtle, basilisk, etc. simply cumulate on the busy page of illustration that faces each page of text.

Radley, Gail. *The Night Stella Hid the Stars*; illus. by John Wallner. Crown, 1978. 78-55545. 29p. \$8.95.

M  
K-2 Wallner's full-color illustrations for this oversize book are kept from pastel sugari-ness by touches of humor; the story has no such mitigating lightness, being a rather cutely contrived piece of fantasy, not badly written but weakly conceived. The Star Lady, Stella (a plump old woman in medieval dress) grew tired of dusting the stars daily in preparation for night, when Nero the Night Man lowered the "evening curtains" and made the world dark. One night she left the stars in a basket, and people on earth were troubled. Nero had the solution: he lowered the evening curtains, Stella did her usual tossing of stars into the night sky, and the winds blew off the stardust and kept the stars sparkling. "The people began to shout for joy," the story ends, "and the happy sound grew so loud that Stella looked down and smiled."

Sachs, Marilyn. *A Secret Friend*. Doubleday, 1978. 77-25606. 111p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$7.90.

Ad  
4-6 Jessica and Wendy had been best friends since they were very small, and for Jessica it was a sad day when the new girl, Barbara, came into their class. Wendy didn't just drop Jessica, she turned nasty and teased her. After several attempts to make up, Jessica realizes that Wendy is obdurate; she knows her friend has always been mischievous and even spiteful, but Wendy was always such fun. Jessica mopes.

This is a familiar plot, but it's given some variety by the fact that Jessica receives a series of cheering letters signed "A.S.F." and tries to discover who her secret friend is. When Wendy's new best friend, Barbara, gets the same contemptuous treatment, Barbara and Jessica have their first real talk—and a new friendship emerges. The fact that Barbara is black is treated casually. A believable story, nicely told but a bit overextended.

St. John, Glory. *What I Did Last Summer*; illus. by Emily Arnold McCully. Atheneum, 1978. 78-5678. 111p. \$7.95.

Ad 3-5 Junior, who tells the story describes the problems he and his brother had in deciding what to take along; Pa finally solved their problem by announcing that one, the whole family would go camping, not just Junior and John, and two, that they'd camp in their own yard. They have the utilities turned off, save for water; the boys build a hideout, Ma does the laundry via tub and hand wringer; they rise and retire early—and they win a prize in a contest for energy-saving ideas. Pa announces that it's been such fun they'll do the same thing next summer. The message of conservation is slightly obtrusive, and the book suffers from lack of focus and direction, but several incidents are mildly amusing (trying to keep cats away from fish that is drying on a roof, being attacked by skunks) and the concept should appeal to readers.

Schlein, Miriam. *I, Tut; the Boy Who Became Pharaoh*; illus. by Erik Hilgerdt. Four Winds, 1978. 78-15603. 43p. \$7.95.

R 3-5 "Am I a lucky boy? I do not know," begins the six-year-old prince, Tutankhaton, third son of the pharaoh Amenhotep the Magnificent, as he describes his life. At the age of nine, he inherits a land that is in rebellion against the regime of his oldest brother, Akhenaton, and the boy pharaoh changes his name to Tutankhamun. He has been married for a year, he is helped by two advisers, and he brings peace and prosperity to Egypt. The story is taken up by his friend Hekenefer, for the beloved young ruler has died at the age of eighteen, having been pharaoh for half his life; his friend describes the mourning, the mystery of his sudden death, and his burial in the sealed tomb in the Valley of the Kings where, Hekenefer concludes, "Tut, alone in his tomb, found his way to eternal life in the Land of the Dead." Simple and dignified, the story should appeal to the many children who know of the tomb and its treasures; the writing is carefully factual, the illustrations faithful to the known art and decorative motifs of ancient Egypt. The author's notes, a glossary, and bibliography of sources are appended.

Scott, Jack Denton. *Island of Wild Horses*; illus. with photographs by Ozzie Sweet. Putnam, 1978. 78-17380. 61p. \$7.95.

R 5- Profusely illustrated by Sweet's action photographs of the coastal island of Asateague, the text describes the lives of the small, sturdy horses that live, free and protected by law, on the windswept island, low and marshy. Scott discusses the several theories as to the horses' origins, the most popular of which is that the original band swam to the island when a Spanish ship was wrecked. He describes the hierarchy within each herd, the yearly competition between stallions who seek, at breeding time, to start or enlarge their herds, and the way in which a foal is born and raised until it gains independence. A staunch conservationist, Scott discusses, as he has in earlier books, both the environmental adaption of the animals he is writing about and the protective legislation that enables them to continue to have their freedom and comparative safety. The writing style is straightforward, the information accurate, the tone sympathetic but not saccharine.

Sharp, Margery. *Bernard into Battle: a Miss Bianca Story*; illus. by Leslie Morrill. Little, 1979. 78-11332. 87p. \$7.95.

R 6- Like earlier stories about Miss Bianca, the beautiful white mouse who led so many of the death-defying forays of the Mouse Prisoners' Aid Society, and her stalwart admirer Bernard, this has a deliberately nonsensical plot (rats invade the ambassadorial premises while the family and staff are on holiday, and it is the loyal mice who—with help—repel them) told in a wonderfully suave and witty style. As always, the derring-do could be appreciated by younger readers were they able to appreciate the light and polished style that mocks the romantic adventure tale; while it's lightweight, the story can be enjoyed for the mock raptures and heroics that make it as elegant a spoof as feathery fiction can be.

Simon, Marcia L. *A Special Gift*. Harcourt, 1978. 78-4329. 132p. \$5.95.

Ad 5-7 Peter enjoys both sports and ballet, but he's aware that his father is embarrassed by the fact that his son dances. Awarded a role in *The Nutcracker*, Peter has to drop out because of an injured ankle; his father had insisted that he not miss basketball practice. Peter had been fearful that his classmates would learn of his interest in ballet; when they do find out, there is taunting—but that's exactly how Peter learns that he can take teasing and that his special gift is one he doesn't want to give up. There's some interesting ballet information, and the story is not badly structured, but it's not well written—the style is stodgy—nor does it have much depth in characterization, and the story seems permeated with calculated message.

Weldrick, Valerie. *Time Sweep*; illus. by Ron Brooks. Lothrop, 1978. 78-11837. 156p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67 net.

R 5-7 An Australian boy of twelve, Laurie has made only one friend since the family's moved to Sydney; he's met Clare in the library, and Clare is the only person he tells about his experiences. At first frightening and then exciting, Laurie's trips in time are spurred by an old bed his parents have bought him; each time he travels, he wakes in London in 1862. Most of the story has to do with Laurie's friendship with a boy his own age; Frank is a poor crossing sweeper who yearns for an education and is delighted when Laurie teaches him to read. The boys traipse about London (lovely period details) and overhear a planned burglary, which they courageously prevent. It's an exciting adventure story, written in fine style and nicely structured. At the close of the story Laurie and Clare discover Frank's great-grandson, a man who is delighted to talk about his ancestor; Laurie and Clare are equally delighted to hear about Frank and to realize that he had come to Sydney because of his friendship, in boyhood, with Laurie.

Wesker, Arnold. *Fatlips; A Story for Children*; illus. by Oscar Zarate. Harper, 1978. 78-52392. 93p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$7.49 net.

M 5-6 The children on the ship called him "Fatlips," and indeed the short, fat old man had thick, blubbery lips—but when he smiled, those who saw him responded instantly with warm affection. He seemed to be able to read minds, and he told a long story of his magical powers, his long search for a mysterious correspondent, Amula, who loved him. And he taught one boy to fly. Amula's story, told in her letters, is a separate, longish story within the story, which ends flatly with Fatlips declaring his magic is gone, he'll have to find Amula without it. "Ah well, all things must pass." There are some nice bits of writing and a few acid little character sketches within the book, but it's very awkwardly constructed, if originally conceived, and its various elements don't seem to make it appropriate for any reading level. The illustrations are cartoon style, peopled by grotesque figures in black and white.

White, Paul. *Janet at School*; illus. with photographs by Jeremy Finlay. T. Y. Crowell, 1978. 77-26681. 23p. \$5.79.

R Full-color photographs show pictures of five-year-old Janet at home, at school, on  
K-2 the playground, and on a camping trip. A victim of spina bifida, a damaged spinal column, this lively child has neither control of nor feeling in her legs, and must use a wheelchair. The text is straightforward, crisp, and simple; it does not ask for sympathy, but it is one of the many fine books that have been appearing in recent years that can help other children understand the limitations of the physically handicapped and the fact that their interests and abilities, save for their physical disabilities, are the same as those of other children.

Williams, Ursula Moray. *Bogwoppit*. Nelson, 1978. 78-57534. 174p. \$6.95.

R Orphaned Samantha is sent to live with her wealthy Aunt Daisy when Aunt Lily,  
5-6 who's been her substitute mother, goes abroad. Aunt Daisy, alas, ignores and apparently dislikes her niece, but by the end of the story Daisy has made Samantha the beneficiary of all her wealth, and they weep at an upcoming temporary separation. This exaggerated but possible realistic framework is filled by bogwoppits, a cuddly, furry invention of a creature that is supposedly in danger of extinction; the fantasy broadens when the bogwoppits multiply and make Aunt Daisy their prisoner in the drain, although they are kind enough to bring her food. The story line is nonsensical but the yeasty style and humor, the colorful characters (Aunt Daisy is a modern equivalent of Lady Bracknell), and even the bogwoppits should engage readers of this English tale.

Winthrop, Elizabeth. *Knock, Knock, Who's There?* Holiday House, 1978. 78-6992. 192p. \$7.95.

Ad Not until after their father's death do adolescents Sam and Michael realize their  
8-10 mother is an alcoholic; as she drinks and withdraws at increased tempo, they learn that all their relatives had always known, as Pa had. They finally face their mother with the fact: she goes to stay with her own family and try to stop drinking; she finally agrees to join a group after she returns, and the story ends with a realistically encouraging hope that she is beginning to gain control. Although the book is well written and has some balance of interests (Sam's amateur theater, the friendship and comfort both boys get from a Catholic priest) it has, unlike Winthrop's others books, the aura of a case history—it's completely believable, but the other aspects of the story seem more a narrative diversion than an integral part of it.

Yolen, Jane. H. *The Simple Prince*; illus. by Jack Kent. Parents' Magazine, 1978. 78-6118. 30p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.99 net.

Ad Cartoon-style drawings add a bit of humor to a nicely told, rather didactic story  
K-3 about learning to appreciate one's lot and being polite. Bored, a prince decides to lead the simple life; he rides off, sees a farmer's cottage, demands admittance and imperiously orders food. The farmer and his wife make the prince work for his meal: he chops wood for the fire; draws water from the well for his tea; helps with milking, churning, and kneading dough. Weary, he falls asleep before he can eat, and later he hastily returns to the palace where—instead of clapping his hands and ordering people about—he always politely says "Please" and "thank you" thereafter.

## READING FOR PARENTS

To order any of the items listed below, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.

Anselmo, Sandra. "Improving Home and Preschool Influences on Early Language Development." *The Reading Teacher*, November, 1978.

Blue, Rose. "Violence in Children's Literature: Can You Make Positive Use of It?" *Teacher*, January, 1979.

Criscuolo, Nicholas P. "Activities That Help Involve Parents in Reading." *The Reading Teacher*, January, 1979.

Hunt, Adrienne P. and Reuter, Janet R. "Readability and Children's Picture Books." *The Reading Teacher*, October, 1978.

Lesiak, Judi. "Reading in Kindergarten: What the Research Doesn't Tell Us." *The Reading Teacher*, November, 1978.

Middleswarth, Victoria. "Folklore Books for Children: Guidelines for Selection." *Top of the News*, Summer, 1978.

Ollila, Lloyd O., ed. *The Kindergarten Child and Reading*. International Reading Association, 1977. 88p. paper. \$4.00; \$2.50 to IRA members, from IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, Newark, DE 19711.

*Parents' Choice: A Review of Children's Media*. Bimonthly publication; subscription rate, \$7.00 a year. Write directly to the magazine at Box 185, Waban, MA 02168.

Reese, William. "Between Home and School: Organized Parents, Clubwomen, and Urban Education in the Progressive Era." *School Review*, November, 1978.

Schickendanz, Judith A. "Please Read That Story Again! . . . Exploring Relationships Between Story Reading and Learning to Read." *Young Children*, July, 1978.

Steffens, Marian R. "Exploring Children's Books—With Parents." *Top of the News*, Summer, 1978.

